Theosemiosis and the Void of Being

Kabbalistic Infinity through a Peircean Lens

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> Breaking grains of sand more and more will only make the sand more broken. It will not weld the grains into unbroken continuity.
>
> —C. S. PEIRCE

ANY ATTEMPT TO REIFY a phenomenon as multifaceted as the kabbalah by identifying an essential core is dubious and runs the risk of the Whiteheadian fallacy of misplaced concreteness, obfuscating the intricacy of the concrete by a presumed abstraction that proffers a false sense of the whole. In Peircean terms, if we ignore the interdependence of all things, and consider each thing for itself, then general terms would correspond to no object; if, however, we accept that any particular thing is dependent on what lies beyond its immediate limits, then we discern that the perpetually abiding totality of that thing's true being—the generic—must be appraised constantly from the viewpoint of the changeable, transitory, and evanescent.[260] This criterion can be applied to the kabbalah: if we are to speak of an essence, then it can be ascertained only from the vantagepoint of the inessential. Any appeal to fixed meaning must be adduced from the fluctuating nature of historical contingencies; the variation of the invariable facilitates the continuity of the discontinuity.

On this score, it is legitimate to say that an enduring attraction for kabbalists has been the challenge to penetrate the impenetrable secret of infinity, to untangle the intractable knot of the mystery of the eternal beginning issuing from the nihilating nonground of the origin beyond conceptual and linguistic demarcation.[261] This generalization is justifiable not only because it is made on the basis of painstaking textual analysis across the span of many decades, but because it is pliable enough to comprise an

endless array of variables. The larger hermeneutical assumption here is my conviction that the conservative and the innovative impulses at play in kabbalistic sources—and, I would argue, in human thinking more broadly—are not to be set in diametric opposition.[262] It is thus eminently defensible to assert that much energy has been expended on the part of kabbalists in deciphering the indecipherable materialization of the immaterial oneness of the indiscriminate being into the plethora of discriminate beings that constitute the nature of reality. From the very early stages of the history of kabbalah, one can detect an inordinate emphasis placed on the emanation from or coeternality with *Ein Sof* of the absolute nothingness (*ayin ha-gamur*), the first of the ten emanations (*sefirot*), commonly denominated as *Keter*, the crown, and identified variously as the incomprehensible thought (*maḥashavah*) or as the incalculable will (*raṣon*).[263, 264]

Insofar as the cosmological speculation of kabbalists has been fixated on the imponderable transition from infinity to finitude—the disclosure of the nondifferentiated nothingness of *Ein Sof* in the differentiated nothingness of *Keter*, and the further manifestation of the latter in the somethingness of *Ḥokhmah*, the divine wisdom, the indivisible point whence the line of equally indivisible points of zero-dimensionality extends[265]—we might even say the imaginal endeavor to penetrate this obdurate spot of impenetrability, the place that is no place, according to the memorable formulation in one zoharic passage,[266] is the central nerve that animates kabbalistic *poiēsis*. The latter term denotes the nexus of language, imagination, and world-making indicative of an ontic sensibility whereby things of the world are envisioned as word-images infused with the vibrancy of the visual verbalization of the verbal visualization.[267]

As Marc Alain Ouaknin has put it, the poetics of kabbalah can be understood primarily as an *opening onto infinity*.[268] This understanding brings to mind the Peircean *theosemiotic*, which is predicated, according to Michael Raposa, on viewing the universe as "God's great poem, a living inferential metaboly of symbols."[269] We could aptly apply to the kabbalists Raposa's insight that Peirce's theosemiotic is a complex theological method that starts with an interpretative reading of signs, and then proceeds with an elucidation of that gesture, culminating in its utilization and crystallization into a rule for

living. Analogously, the ruminations of the masters of Jewish esoteric lore are, first and foremost, a hermeneutical act of interpretation predicated on the postulate that every entity in the chain of being is an expression of the inexpressible and therefore a sign to be decoded,[270] or as Gershom Scholem put it, seen kabbalistically, nature is nothing but a shadow of the name.[271]

The kabbalistic worldview has affinity with the conflation of the idealist and realist perspectives on the relation between matter and mind in Peirce's thought, in part due to the influence of Schelling's *Naturphilosophie*.[272] What is especially relevant is the contention that nature is "the essential medium through which the sacred reveals itself,"[273] the domain in which freedom and necessity, in emulation of the divine,[274] are integrated into a unified account "in which the noumenal and the phenomenal intertwine in an organic, and thus chaotic, evolving cycle of self-differentiation."[275] Interestingly, Peirce explicitly acknowledged his indebtedness to the spiritualization of nature and the naturalization of spirit that may be elicited from Schelling:

> I have begun by showing that *tychism* must give birth to an evolutionary cosmology, in which all the regularities of nature and of mind are regarded as products of growth, and to a Schelling-fashioned idealism which holds matter to be mere specialized and partially deadened mind. I may mention, for the benefit of those who are curious in studying mental biographies, that I was born and reared in the neighborhood of Concord—I mean in Cambridge—at the time when Emerson, Hedge, and their friends were disseminating the ideas that they had caught from Schelling, and Schelling from Plotinus, from Boehm, of from God knows what minds stricken with the monstrous mysticism of the East.[276]

In the continuation of this passage, Peirce denies having been contracted by the virus of "Concord transcendentalism," but he admits that "it was probable that some cultured bacilli, some benignant form of the disease was implanted in my soul, unawares, and that now, after long incubation, it comes to the

surface, modified by mathematical conceptions and by training in physical investigations."[277]

In a more candid moment, Peirce confessed in a letter to William James on January 28, 1894, that his views regarding the relationship of the inorganic and the organic "were probably influenced by Schelling,—by all stages of Schelling, but especially by the *Philosophie de Natur*. I consider Schelling as enormous; and one thing I admire about him is his freedom from the trammels of system, and his holding himself uncommitted to any previous utterance. In that, he is like a scientific man. If you were to call my philosophy Schellingism transformed in the light of modern physics, I should not take it hard."[278] Significantly, although evidently not appreciated by Peirce, Schelling's views on this subject likely betray as well the impact of Lurianic cosmology.[279] I shall return to this topic below. At this juncture, what needs to be emphasized is that the linguistic essence of reality is the axiological foundation for what is conventionally called in scholarship kabbalistic theurgy but which I would rename, in the spirit of Peirce, as semeiotic pragmatism.[280] The change in nomenclature is justified by the fact that, according to the kabbalists, the primary purpose of righteous action is to unify the letters of the Tetragrammaton, the name that comprises all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet—the *Ursprache* that, in medieval parlance, is the hylic matter through which all existents are constellated or, in a more contemporary idiom, the genome of being—and the principal danger of transgression is that the unity is torn asunder. The kabbalists surely would assent to Peirce's observation that "the universe is a vast representamen, a great symbol of God's purpose, working out its conclusions in living realities. Now every symbol must have, organically attached to it, its Indices of Reactions and its Icons of Qualities; and such part as these reactions and these qualities play in an argument that they, of course, play in the universe—that Universe being precisely an argument."[281]

The ideational foundation of the theosemiotic praxis is the concerted effort to explain the beginning that comes forth from the beginninglessness of the primordial nothing. This is the conceptual posture whence we can extrapolate the dialetheic paradox[282] that every being is a manifestation of the nonmanifest manifest in its nonmanifestation. The ascetic-quietistic

underpinning of kabbalistic piety is grounded in this meontological orientation: attunement to the nothingness of being uncovers the inestimable value of the being of nothingness that is the cosmos. Expressed in a different terminological register, the ethos of the kabbalists—the demand to redeem the world theopolitically by liberating the sparks of light entrapped in the shards of darkness, or in its more radical formulation, to transpose the darkness into light—is sustained by the paradoxical presumption that the trace of infinity is tangibly present in the concatenation of the worlds from which it is intangibly absent, that nature is the place wherein the placelessness of the void is concomitantly placed and unplaced,[283] that the manifold reveals the face of the mystery of the one it conceals, that the projection of being must always be gauged from the standpoint of the nonbeing of the withdrawal of being—the more impervious the visible, the more transparent the invisible, the more hidden the exposed, the more exposed the hidden.

My hypothesis, simply stated, is that the kabbalistic symbolism can be beneficially translated into the evolutionary logic articulated by Peirce and the trichotomous structure that informed his philosophic architectonic.[284] Reflecting on the origin of the universe in an essay written in 1898, Peirce maintained that to account for this matter in a logical and scientific manner, we must suppose "an initial condition in which the whole universe was nonexistent, and therefore a state of absolute nothing."[285] However, this state before the universe existed is not a "pure abstract being," but rather a "state of just nothing at all, not even a state of emptiness, for even emptiness is something."[286] Elaborating the point, he writes,

> We start, then, with nothing, pure zero. But this is not the nothing of negation. For *not* means *other than*, and *other* is merely a synonym of the ordinal numeral *second*. As such it implies a first; while the present pure zero is prior to every first. The nothing of negation is the nothing of death, which comes *second* to, or after, everything. But this pure zero is the nothing of not having been born. . . . It is the germinal nothing, in which the whole universe is involved or foreshadowed. As such, it is

> absolutely undefined and unlimited possibility—boundless possibility. There is no compulsion and no law. It is boundless freedom.[287]

Translated kabbalistically, the two forms of nothing, the pure zero and the nothing of negation, correspond respectively to *Ein Sof* and *Keter*. The former is the origin, the germinal nothing in which the universe is foreshadowed, the "womb of indeterminacy,"[288] inchoate in its limitless potential[289] and boundless in its lawless freedom; by contrast, the beginning is the flash discharged by the "principle of firstness," which, in turn, occasions the "principle of habit," or "secondedness,"[290] by which being begins to be differentiated from nonbeing. The beginning is thus the second that is first insofar as the origin is prior to every first. As a consequence of the coming forth of the nothing of negation from the pure zero—the movement within the immovable, the provocation of the novel repetition of the eternal beginning[291]—time emerges as the time before time, what Peirce refers to as the brute compulsion[292] confabulated as the logical sequence to depict the state of things before time was temporally organized.[293] In his own words, "Though time would not yet have been, this second flash was in some sense after the first because resulting from it. Then there would come other successions ever more and more closely connected, the habits and the tendency to take them ever strengthening themselves, until the events would have been bound together into something like a continuous flow."[294]

The view of temporality implicit in this comment resonates with the conception of the temporal order that shaped kabbalistic thinking—designated by the rabbinic locution *seder zemannim*—which precedes the computable ebb and flow of time.[295] The sempiternal nature of time presumed by the kabbalists is to be contrasted with the notion of timeless eternity, traceable to Parmenides and reinforced in Neoplatonic sources: the delimitation of the eternal as that which distends without beginning or end and is therefore devoid of the tensiveness of temporal elasticity.[296] The kabbalistic understanding of time that precedes time rests on the more paradoxical supposition that eternity is archetypically timelike in its capacity for unremitting metamorphosis and that, inversely, time is paradigmatically

eternal in its ability to sustain a vacillating stability.[297] Cast in Heideggerian terms, time, like the shadowy nature of the dream, is marked by the appearing of the nonapparent, that is, the appearing of what is withheld from appearing, the presencing of what prevails as absent, not because it is a presence that is not present—the nonbeing measured according to the metrics of being—but because it is present as nonpresent, the nonbeing that belongs to being as disclosed in the opening through the language of the human being.[298] In its oneiric fleetingness, time upholds the paradox that presencing is always concomitantly absencing,[299] indeed, a presencing that perseveres in the absencing of absencing, a disappearing of the appearance that withdraws in the appearing of its disappearance. Phenomenologically, the dream is the domain of the nonreal that is situated between the no-longer-real and the not-yet-real, and as a result, the line separating facticity and fictionality is conspicuously blurred.[300] Within the parameters of the spacetime apposite to the dream, the nonreal becomes the possible of what is actually real, and hence possibility is to be construed not merely as pure nonbeing, but rather as the state that oscillates between the being of nonbeing and the nonbeing of being.[301] The dream is thus illustrative of Peirce's larger claim regarding the phaneroscopy—in some measure reminiscent of the Husserlian *epochē* and the suspension of the ontological presuppositions of the natural attitude concerning the status of that which is manifest—as "the description of the *phaneron*; and by the *phaneron* I mean the collective total of all that is in any way or in any sense present to the mind, regardless of whether it corresponds to any real thing or not. . . . It will be plain from what has been said that phaneroscopy has nothing at all to do with the question of how far the *phanerons* it studies correspond to any realities. It religiously abstains from all speculation as to any relations between its categories and physiological facts, cerebral or other. . . . It simply scrutinizes the direct appearances, and endeavors to combine minute accuracy with the broadest possible generalization."[302]

Utilizing Peirce's signature conception of the triadic categories of reasoning,[303] to which he refers in one place as the ubiquitous elements of the universal phenomenon,[304] we can say that from the prospect of the firstness of the origin, the temporality that applies to the secondness of the beginning is

centered in the moment—the present instant of infinitesimal duration[305]—that retrieves the existential actuality of the past as the necessary contingency of the future,[306] the habitual element of thirdness mediated perpetually between the chance of what was and the law of what is to come. In a similar vein, kabbalists seek to demarcate the midpoint between the nothingness of the eternal origin of time and the somethingness of the temporal beginning of eternity, what Azriel of Gerona called the "now in proximity to the creation of the world" (*attah mi-qarov li-veri'at ha-olam*).[307] To the extent that the determinate beingness of the nothing of negation is contained in the absolute nothingness of the indeterminate zeroness, the second should be considered as primordial as the first, but the primordiality of the secondary is to be distinguished from the primordiality of its source in the same manner that the light of a primary candle is to be differentiated from the light of all the ancillary candles illumined subsequently from it. We may infer, therefore, that the manifestation of the sefirotic emanations as discrete entities—literally, according to Azriel's language, in the "division of their being" (*be-ḥilluq hawayyatam*)—does not imply that there is any innovation (*ḥiddush*) on the part of the infinite.[308] Even so, we can elicit from this kabbalist the view, shared by others, that the sefirotic gradations are not brought into being in time but they are nonetheless the enduring configurations that determine the contours of the evanescence of temporality. Ultimately, there is no answer to the question why did the emanation occur now and not before, since the *now*, when properly considered, is itself constituted by the delineation *from before*; that is, the moment can be commemorated only by the retention of the prehension of what has already never been, the retroactive not yet, the recurrence of the wholly dissimilar in which there is no time intervening between the first that is last and the last that is first.

The nullity of the nonrelative character of the monad yields the dyadic correlativity of the commencement, which engenders, in turn, the polyadic relationality that complements the abstractions of the zero and the nothing of negation; the third as correlate between the self and other secures the fact that the numerical passage from many to one will preclude the absorption of many into one.[309] The synthesis of the singular consciousness of the first and the dual consciousness of the second is adjudicated in the plural

consciousness of the third, the psychological tripartite that corresponds logically to the conceptions of quality, relation, and synthesis or mediation, and semiotically to the trichotomy of signs—the icon, index, and symbol—through which the relationship between sign, signified, and mental cognition, is clarified.[310]

> The First is that which has its being or peculiarity within itself. The Second is that which is what it is by force of something else. The third is that which is as it is owing to other things between which it mediates. The First presents itself as original, immediate, fresh, unsubjected to anything that went before or stands behind, and is therefore spontaneous and free. . . . The Second, last, term, or end is found in such facts as Another, Relation, Force [not in the abstract, but as it presents itself to one who gets hit], Effect, Dependence, Occurrence, Reality, Upshot. . . . By the Third, I understand the medium which has its being or peculiarity in connecting the more absolute first and second. The end is second, the means third. A fork in the road is third, it supposes three ways.[311]

The first assumes the status of the second, indeed the potentiality of the first is determined from the actuality of the second, which entails the "nothing of not having been born," as opposed to the "nothing of death."

In an unfinished letter to his student, Christine Ladd-Franklin, drafted on August 29, 1891, Peirce described his cosmology as espousing the theory that

> the evolution of the world is *hyperbolic*, that is, proceeds from one state of things in the infinite past, to a different state of things in the infinite future. The state of things in the infinite past is chaos, *tohu bohu*, the nothingness of which consists in the total absence of regularity. The state of things in the infinite future is death, the nothingness of which consists in the complete triumph of law and absence of spontaneity. Between these, we have on *our* side a state of things in which there is some absolute spontaneity counter to all law, and some degree of conformity to

> law, which is constantly on the increase owing to the growth of *habit*. . . . As to the part of time on the further side of eternity which leads back to the infinite future to the infinite past, it evidently proceeds by contraries.[312]

As Peirce put it elsewhere, if we presume that "real existence," or "thingness," consists of regularities, we may infer that the "primeval chaos in which there was no regularity was mere nothing, from a physical aspect. Yet it was not a blank zero; for there was an intensity of consciousness there in comparison with which all that we ever feel is but as the struggling of a molecule or two to throw off a little of the force of law to an endless and innumerable diversity of chance utterly unlimited."[313] Geometrically, the primal chaos exhibits the quality of unlimited chance, the double absolute of probability; that is, the probability that "ranges from an unattainable absolute certainty *against* a proposition to an equally unattainable absolute certainty *for* it. A line, according to ordinary notions . . . is a linear quantity where the two points at infinity coincide."[314]

The coincidence of the two points at infinity is classified as the binary of being and nothing, the dyadic language that has dominated metaphysical speculation from antiquity. The proper assessment of this truism requires, according to Peirce, that at the outset we reject the Hegelian presumption that "Being is the abstraction belonging in common and exclusively to the objects of the concrete term, whose extension is unlimited or all-embracing, and whose comprehension is null," and that Nothing also is "an abstract term = nothingness; for otherwise to say that Being is Nothing, is like saying that humanity is non-man, and does not imply at all that Being is in any opposition with itself, since it would only say 'Das Sein is nicht Seiendes,' not 'Sein ist nicht Sein.'"[315] In a manner that curiously anticipates Heidegger's insistence on the ontological difference between being and beings, Peirce suggests that the seemingly paradoxical premise that being is nothing does not imply that being is not being but only that being is not a being. Nothing, on this account, would be the abstract term corresponding to the concrete term that is the logical contradictory of the concrete term that corresponds to being. In the 1890 "Lecture on Logic and Philosophy," Peirce

offers his critique of Hegel's identification of being and nothing in terms of the image that Jacob saw in the dream at Bethel, the ladder resting on earth and stretching to heaven (Gen 28:12):

> It follows that our Jacob's ladder properly speaking has no definite top or bottom; above it is lost in the clouds of heaven, below in the smoke of the pit. . . . Nevertheless, when we examine not the relations of the objects named but the relations of the names themselves as shown in Jacob's ladder, we are easily led to the conception of a name whose logical comprehension shall be null, and its extension unlimited, and this name is Being. We are also led to the conception of a name whose extension shall be null & its comprehension unlimited, & this name is Nothing. For we may predicate whatever we like of nothing and there will be no falsity in the proposition. Thus we attain a pair of clear metaphysical ideas of a most abstract nature. Being & Nothing are not mere Reality & Figment. For even a figment is something, and therefore comes under the head of being. But the pure metaphysical being and nothing are conceptions which have little place in our ordinary thoughts. What I wish to call attention to is the very clear apprehension we obtain of these notions when we consider them as representing the fictitious extremes of the logical Jacob's ladder. For instance Hegel as you know that tries to make out that Being is Nothing & nothing being. And how? Why he says Being is a purely empty conception. That is true in this sense that it is the conception of a conception devoid of logical comprehension. But that does not make it at all like Nothing which is only devoid of Extension & has unlimited Comprehension. Hegel would therefore not have fallen into his contradiction if he had made his metaphysical conceptions clear by insisting on determining what the phenomena of logic are which these conceptions represent.[316]

Upholding the law of contradiction against the Hegelian dialectic, Peirce affirms that "there is nothing which is, which is also not. Therefore, it follows that *what is*, and *what is not*, are mutually exclusive and not coëxtensive."[317] Insofar as beingness and nothingness are corresponding abstractions devoid of determination, they are absolutely the same and absolutely different—indeed, the same in virtue of their difference and different in virtue of their sameness. Consequently, being is the analytic equivalent to nothing—or the nought as Peirce prefers to name it—to the extent that it is pure being in contradistinction to determined being, or, expressed in German, *Daseyn* as opposed to *Seyn*, that is, existence or extant being rather than being as such.[318] The nought, accordingly, is the pure void to be distinguished from the nothing in the sense of no thing, the pure vacuity, the determination that is isolated from any substrate and therefore indeterminate.[319]

Analytic thought always "sunders the concrete, and never takes note of the link which binds"[320]—the singularity of being that can only be discerned from the interrelatedness of the multiplicity of all beings,[321] a particularity indexical of a universality that is always context-specific[322]—and thus, as a consequence of its dualizing proclivity, it arrives at the abstract simple, which leads one to consider the self-contradictory conundrum of the *genetic universal*: "To seize the pure simple in thought is to cancel it; for by seizing it in thought, we seize it as the negation of the determined, and by so doing we place it in opposition, and thereby determine it."[323] The turning point where analysis becomes synthesis relates to the pure simple, the ultimate abstraction that has two forms, pure affirmation and pure negation; the two coincide in the unconditional void in which there is no indistinct distinction and therefore no distinct indistinction. Expressed syllogistically, if difference is determination, and being has no determination, it follows that there is no differential mark that distinguishes being from nothing, and thus being is nothing.[324] It follows, therefore, that the perfect cosmology, according to Peirce, implies that all three universes—the number of universes that he thinks are ideationally possible—must be considered as "completely nil" to the extent that they are "necessary results of a state of utter nothingness. We cannot ourselves conceive of such a state of nility; but we can easily conceive that there should be a mind that could conceive it, since, after all, no

contradiction can be involved in mere nonexistence."[325] A similar logic can be ascribed to the kabbalistic symbol of *Ein Sof*, which is outside the economy of the ontotheological binary inasmuch as it is the unconditional void that is simultaneously pure affirmation and pure negation. The self-determination of the indeterminate is such that it affirms itself to the degree that it negates itself and negates itself to the degree that it affirms itself. In the infinitivity of the absolute zero, all things are interconnected to the extent that the indefinite suchness of their nonbeing is the definite emptiness of their being. The meontology avowed by kabbalists comparably posits that, inasmuch as the source of everything is the utter nothingness of the infinite, finite existence is completely nil. We can speak, therefore, of naturalizing transcendence[326] in both Peircean and kabbalistic cosmology as long as it is understood that the transcendent is present in the world to the degree that it is absent from the world; indeed, the transcendent is present precisely as that which is absent.

But how do kabbalists understand the shift from absolute zero to the nothing of negation? In Peircean terms, what One of the boldest mythopoeic doctrines to explain this process can be found in the teachings promulgated in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries by Israel Saruq[327] about the jouissance (*sha'ashu'a*) associated with the initial withdrawal or constriction (*ṣimṣum*) of the light of infinity.[328] As with many things kabbalistic, the choice of terminology reverberates with many layers of philological-textual sedimentation. In this particular case, the utilization of the term *sha'ashu'a* to depict God's relation to the Torah prior to the creation of the world is found in older rabbinic sources, based on the description of Wisdom in Proverbs (8:30) and echoed in Psalms (119:77, 92, 143).[329] The Saruqian materials also reflect the connotation of this term in the writings of previous kabbalists,[330] including especially the zoharic compilation, where it is connected most frequently to the theme of God taking delight with the souls of the righteous in the Garden of Eden,[331] and Moses Cordovero (1522–70), where it connotes, *inter alia*, the infinite's contemplation of its own essence, which is beyond human comprehension,[332] the first stirrings of the divine will to be garbed in the sefirotic gradations.[333] The erotic element amplified in the

Lurianic sources is latent in some of the passages in Cordovero's voluminous corpus.[334]

An audacious articulation of this myth is found in an anonymous Lurianic text that begins with the startling assertion, "Before all the emanation *Ein Sof* was alone bemusing himself" (*qodem kol ha-aṣilut hayah ha-ein sof levado mishta'ashe'a be-aṣmuto*).[335] From the continuation, which describes the emergence of the letter *yod*—a cipher for the seminal point of divine wisdom—from the infinite, we can deduce that this text is a commentary on the notoriously difficult zoharic passage linked to the first verse of Genesis, "In the beginning of the decree of the king, the hardened spark engraved an engraving in the supernal luster" (*be-reish hurmenuta de-malka galif gelufei bi-ṭehiru illa'ah boṣina de-qardinuta*).[336] I render the term *sha'ashu'a* as *bemusement*—understood in an antiquated sense as to gaze meditatively or to ruminate and not in the more conventional connotation to be puzzled or to be bewildered[337]—to capture in a Lacanian fashion the dual connotation of jouissance as erotic rhapsody and noetic bliss.[338] Hence, when I translate the idiom of these texts as the infinite bemusing itself, what I have in mind is an ecstatic amusement that is of a contemplative nature. The rapturous nature of the kabbalistic *sha'ashu'a* is simultaneously cerebral and somatic. The theme of the demiurgic playfulness of the stimulation on the part of *Ein Sof* is highlighted by Saruq:

> You must know that prior to everything, the blessed holy One bemused himself [*mishta'ashe'a be-aṣmo*], that is, he was joyous and he took delight. . . . And from the quivering [*ni'anu'a*] of the spark the Torah was created. . . . Know that the quivering that arose from the bemusement consisted of ten quiverings, corresponding to the *yod*, and they are the ten letters whence every tenfold derives.[339] When the blessed holy One was being amused prior to the [existence of the worlds of] emanation, creation, formation, and doing, and before everything, the blessed One filled all the worlds, that is, [he was] the place wherein it was appropriate for all the worlds to be created, he

> made a garment [*levush*] from the light of his essence, which is the Torah.[340]

It lies beyond the scope of this chapter to delve into the complexity of the kabbalistic motif, but suffice it to note an interesting conceptual parallel that can be found in the Peircean idea of the pure play of musement. In the essay "A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God" (1908), Peirce utilizes this motif to account for the meditative-experiential basis for belief in the infinitely incomprehensible God:

> But let religious meditation be allowed to grow up spontaneously out of Pure Play without any breach of continuity; and the Muser will retain the perfect candor proper to Musement. If one who had determined to make trial of Musement as a favorite recreation were to ask me for advice, I should reply as follows: The dawn and the gloaming most invite one to Musement; but I have found no watch of the nychthemeron that has not its own advantages for the pursuit. . . . There is no kind of reasoning that I should wish to discourage in Musement; and I should lament to find anybody confining it to a method of such moderate fertility as logical analysis. Only, the Player should bear in mind that the higher weapons in the arsenal of thought are not playthings, but edge-tools. In any mere Play they can be used by way of exercise alone; while logical analysis can be put to its full efficiency in Musement. . . . But however that may be, in the Pure Play of Musement the idea of God's Reality will be sure sooner or later to be found an attractive fancy, which the Muser will develop in various ways. The more he ponders it, the more it will find response in every part of his mind, for its beauty, for its supplying an ideal of life, and for its thoroughly satisfactory explanation of his whole threefold environment.[341]

Prima facie, the obvious discrepancy between Peirce and the kabbalists must be noted: the focus of the former's remarks about musement is chiefly restricted to the psychological plane, describing the nature of meditation on

the divine reality, whereas the latter is theosophic in orientation, deploying the motif of musement to depict the autoerotic/noetic activity of the infinite in the initial stage of the emanation. There is justification, however, to draw this parallel based on the alleged influence of German idealism on Peirce's description of the originary state of the self-becoming of the void of being.[342] More important than tracing the trajectory of this history of ideas is recognizing that, for both Peirce and the kabbalists, the dichotomy of mind and matter is challenged by the assumption that matter is a specialization of mind and that mind partakes of the nature of matter. Hence, it is be a mistake to conceive of the psychical and the physical aspects of matter as two categorically disparate aspects. The distinction rather is a matter of perspective: when a thing is viewed from the outside, it appears as matter; when it is viewed from the inside, it appears as consciousness. Peirce goes so far as to argue that mechanical laws are, in truth, acquired habits of the mind derived from the generalization inferred from the spreading of feelings.[343] That the laws of physics are, in the final analysis, expressive of a network of feelings attests to the fact that the materiality of things is constituted by the stream of mentation. Based on this surmise regarding the commingling of the physical and the psychical, Peirce insists, as I noted above, that even the nothingness of the primeval chaos is not a blank zero, since it exhibits an intensity of consciousness.[344]

Needless to say, kabbalists would not have used the precise language of Peirce, but the supposition that they conceived of *Ein Sof* as a field of consciousness, albeit a consciousness that exceeds the horizon of human consciousness, is hardly anachronistic. Moreover, in consonance with Peirce, the kabbalists did not view mind and body as autonomous substances but rather as heteronomous perspectives of one substance. And here again it is apposite to summon the semeiotic predisposition: kabbalists concur wholeheartedly with Peirce's view that God, humankind, and the universe are signs.[345] For the masters of Jewish esoteric lore, the somatic is transformed by this semeiotic conception: the substance of the body—divine, human, and cosmic—is constituted by the Hebrews letters, which are comprised within the Tetragrammaton.[346] Hence, the contemplative envisioning at the heart of the kabbalistic lifeworld—specularizing what defies specularization,

ascribing an image to the imageless, beholding the icon of the invisible—is based on the transubstantiation of the physical body into the linguistic body. Not to understand the central role accorded this metamorphosis is to miss the phenomenological core of the kabbalah as a meditational discipline meant to foster an *embodied spirituality*,[347] a state of mindfulness whereby spirit mirrors body mirrored in spirit. The primeval chaos of the infinite is characterized equally as boundless consciousness and as unlimited protoplasm, and thus it comports the quality of chance that surpasses the bonds of law and the strictures of habit, the illimitable will that wills nothing but the nothing of its own willfulness.

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260. Peirce, “Nominalism versus Realism,” 153–54. See below, n. 62. On Peirce’s rejection of the Kantian notion of things-in-themselves, see Rosensohn, *Phenomenology of Charles S. Peirce*, 16.

261. Wolfson, “Nihilating Nonground,” 31–45. I have taken the liberty to repeat here some of my argument from that study.

262. The paradoxical identification of novelty and repetition, innovation and conservation, is reiterated in many of my publications. See Wolfson, *Language*, 89–94, 116–17; Wolfson, *Alef, Mem, Tau*, 55–61; Wolfson, “Mythopoeic Imagination,” 233–38; Wolfson, *Open Secret*, 22–24; Wolfson, “Anonymous Chapters,” 152–54, 159–72.

263. Scholem, *Major Trends*, 207–9, 214–16; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 265–70; Scholem, *Kabbalah*, 88–96; Tishby, *Wisdom of the Zohar*, 229–55; Valabregue-Perry, *Concealed and Revealed*; Valabregue-Perry, “Concept of Infinity,” 405–30.

264. Matt, “Ayin,” 121–59.

265. Regarding this paradox of geometric points, see Huemer, *Approaching Infinity*, 18–20.

266. Zohar 1:161b (Tosefta). The precise wording is *ha-hu atar law atar*, “that place is no place.” See Wolfson, *Language*, 233–34.

267. Wolfson, *Language*, 25–26.

268. Ouaknin, *Mysteries of the Kabbalah*, 97–98.

269. Raposa, *Peirce’s Philosophy of Religion*, 144. See Raposa, “Brief History of Theosemiotic.” Raposa’s taxonomy serves as the basis for the perspective enunciated by Peter Ochs, “Theosemiotics and Pragmatism,” and later expanded in Ochs, *Peirce, Pragmatism*. My application of the theosemiotic to kabbalistic hermeneutics builds on Ochs’ suggestion that Peircean pragmatism produces a scriptural logic whose goal is to repair broken lives and heal societal suffering.

270. Scholem, “Name of God,” 165–66, 185–86; Scholem, *Origins of the Kabbalah*, 448.

271. Biale, “Gershom Scholem’s,” 81–82.

272. On the realist and idealist dimensions of Peirce’s thought, see the analysis in Anderson, “Realism and Idealism,” 185–92; Hausman, *Charles S. Peirce’s Evolutionary Philosophy*, 140–93. See also Colapietro, “Ground of Semiosis,” 129–40.

273. Matthews, *Schelling’s Organic Form*, 7. Compare ibid., 19: “Exploding the linear causality of the mathematical categories, the multivalent causality of nature as a dynamic whole provides Schelling with an understanding of life, as absolute self-action, as the schema of freedom.” See also Grant, *Philosophies of Nature*, 1–25; Mules, *With Nature*, 49–103; Sallis, *Return of Nature*, 22, 28–43. For a brief summary and background of Schelling’s position, see Faivre, *Access to Western Esotericism*, 82–83.

274. Schelling, *Der Weltalter*, 209. For an English rendering, see Schelling, *Ages of the World*, 5. On the reconciliation of necessity and possibility in Peirce’s idea of the vagueness of divine omnipotence, see Leahy, *Beyond Sovereignty*, 48–49.

275. Matthews, *Schelling’s Organic Form*, 7.

276. Peirce, “Law of Mind,” in *CP* 6.102. On Peirce and German Idealism, see Niemoczynski,

Charles Sanders Peirce, 57–59. Peirce's relationship to the later Schelling is discussed by Ejsing, *Theology of Anticipation*, 59–73. Particularly noteworthy is the analysis of nature's sacred depths in Peirce, Schelling, and Heidegger offered by Niemoczynski, *Charles Sanders Peirce*, 109–48.

277. Peirce, "Law of Mind," *CP* 6.102.

278. Perry, *Thought and Character*, 415–16, cited in Matthews, *Schelling's Organic Form*, xi and 225 n. 2. On Schelling's critique of system, see Matthews, op. cit., xi–xii. Concerning the question of the legitimacy of positing a Peircean system, see Rosensohn, *Phenomenology*, 3–8. See also Short, "Peirce and the Incommensurability," 119–31, and the analysis of the structure of objectivity in Short, *Peirce's Theory of Signs*, 317–47. See also Nadin, "Logic of Vagueness," 154–66.

279. Franks, "Peirce's 'Schelling-Fashioned Idealism,'" 733–34, 745–51. Franks argues that when Peirce acknowledged in "The Law of Mind" the influence of "the monstrous mysticism of the East" (see reference above, n. 17), it alludes to the Lurianic kabbalah, which was disseminated to European philosophers through translations into Latin published in the mid-seventeenth century. Franks admits he has found no direct reference to the kabbalah in Peirce but he does cite (p. 745 n. 24) a passage from an address given in 1853 by his father, Benjamin, to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, wherein the kabbalah is invoked explicitly in support of the idea that there is an all-pervading language in nature that speaks to the human mind. This essay complements the study of Franks, although my emphasis is on elucidating some kabbalistic ideas utilizing Peirce rather than suggesting that Peirce was influenced, directly or indirectly, by the kabbalah. On the relationship of Schelling and the kabbalah, see references cited in Wolfson, *Heidegger and Kabbalah*, 18–19 n. 40.

280. Here I acknowledge my indebtedness to the attempt of Ochs, *Peirce, Pragmatism*, 290–305, to articulate a semeiotics of rabbinic pragmatism based on a restatement of the organic thinking explicated by Max Kadushin in light of a Peircean pragmaticism. My application of Peirce's hermeneutics to kabbalistic texts does not coincide with Ochs' strategy to establish a reparative semiosis of communal life, but it has been inspired by the *Sprachdenken* between us that began many years ago.

281. Peirce, "Reality of Thirdness," *CP* 5.119. Peirce, "On a New List of Categories," *CP* 1.564: "A representation is that character of a thing by virtue of which, for the production of a certain mental effect, it may stand in place of another thing. The thing having this character I term a *representamen*, the mental effect, or thought, its *interpretant*, the thing for which stands, its *object*" (emphasis in original). On the sign, semiosis, and the representamen, see Deledalle, *Charles S. Peirce's Philosophy of Signs*, 37–53.

282. The logic of dialetheism entails the repudiation of the law of noncontradiction based on the belief that the identification of opposites in the identity of their opposition yields a genuine and irresolvable contradiction; that is, the truth of a statement that presumes the paradoxical form α and ¬α, which translates into the disjunctive syllogism if it is the case that α, then it is not the case that α, is a direct reproach of the more prevalent logic that for every statement either α or ¬α is true but both cannot be true at the same time and in the same relation. My embrace of dialetheism is indebted to the analysis of Priest, *Beyond the Limits*; Priest, *In Contradiction*. The logical and epistemological repercussions of dialetheism are explored critically in the studies included in Priest, Beall, and Armour-Garb, *Law of Non-Contradiction*.

283. My formulation here is indebted to the discussion of nature as the place of non-place in Mules, *With Nature*, 39–40.

284. Rosensohn, *Phenomenology*, 8–17, 69–75; Fisch, "Peirce's Triadic Logic," 171–83; Spinks, *Peirce and Triadomania*; Parker, *Continuity of Peirce's Thought*, 112–22. The Peircean phenomenological categories are critically evaluated by Leahy, *Foundation*, 282–86, 455–62; Leahy,

Faith and Philosophy, 131–41; Leahy, *Beyond Sovereignty*, 90–93, 255–56, 294–95.

285. Peirce, "Objective Logic," *CP* 6.215.

286. Peirce, "Objective Logic," *CP* 6.215.

287. Peirce, "Objective Logic," *CP* 6.217 (emphasis in original). See Sheriff, *Charles Peirce's Guess at the Riddle*, 4. On the Peircean reflections on zeroness, see also Spinks, *Peirce and Triadomania*, 23–26.

288. Peirce, "Guess at the Riddle," *Writings* 6.209.

289. Here it is apposite to mention the following passage in the lecture Peirce, "Seven Systems of Metaphysics," 180: "The doctrine of Aristotle is distinguished from substantially all modern philosophy by its recognition of at least two grades of being. That is, besides actual reactive existence, Aristotle recognizes a germinal being, an *esse in potentia* or I like to call it an *esse in futuro*. In places Aristotle has glimpses of a distinction between ἐνέργεια and ἐντελέχεια." As the editors remark, Peirce, *Essential Peirce*, 522 n. 4, "Peirce originally inserted 'except perhaps Schelling's & mine' after 'modern philosophy'; he then apparently changed his mind, crossed out the insertion, and added instead the word 'substantially' earlier in the sentence." Even though Peirce crossed out the words "except perhaps Schelling's & mine," it is suggestive that, at first, he did consider that his thought was identical to Schelling in upholding Aristotle's distinction between actuality (ἐνέργεια) and potentiality (δύναμις), and the association of the latter with the temporal coordinate of the future. It seems reasonable to relate this comment to Peirce's idea of the germinal nothing, which, like the kabbalistic *Ein Sof*, comports the entelechic realization of the *esse in potentia*.

290. Peirce, "Guess at the Riddle," *Writings* 6.209.

291. With regard to the matter of the eternal beginning, one can detect the influence of Schelling. See Mules, *With Nature*, 61–62.

292. Peirce, "Issues of Pragmatism," *CP* 5.463.

293. Peirce, "Objective Logic," *CP* 6.147. Compare Peirce, "Neglected Argument for the Reality of God," *CP* 6.490: "A disembodied spirit, or pure mind, has its being out of time, since all that it is destined to think is fully in its being at any and every previous time. But in endless time it is destined to think all that it is capable of thinking."

294. Peirce, "Guess at the Riddle," *Writings* 6.209. On the continuity of time, see Parker, *Continuity*, 110–12. For an analysis of time in the various stages in the development of Peirce's philosophy, see as well Helm, "Nature and Modes of Time," 178–88.

295. Wolfson, *Alef*, 62, 73, 77–79, 84, 86–88, 109–11, 115, 216 n. 108, 220 n. 151, 222 n. 180.

296. Manchester, *Syntax of Time*, 107–8.

297. Manchester, *Syntax of Time*, 108.

298. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "Remembrance,"* 97; Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken,"* 114.

299. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "Remembrance,"* 100; Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken,"* 117.

300. Wolfson, *Dream Interpreted*, 46–57. Compare the comment of Charles S. Peirce in the 1868 essay "Questions Concerning Certain Faculties," 196: "In trying to give an account of a dream, every accurate person must often have felt that it was a hopeless undertaking to attempt to disentangle waking

interpretations and fillings out from the fragmentary images of the dream itself. . . . A dream, as far as its own content goes, is exactly like an actual experience. . . . Besides, even when we wake up, we do not find that the dream differed from reality, except by certain marks, darkness and fragmentariness. Not unfrequently a dream is so vivid that the memory of it is mistaken for the memory of an actual occurrence" (emphasis in original). On the semiotics of dreams, with a special emphasis on Peirce, see Spinks, *Semiosis*, 155–75. See also Merrell, *Peirce, Signs, and Meaning*, 209–29. Peirce's narrowing the epistemic gap between dreams and waking consciousness is connected to the supremacy he accords to the imagination. For instance, see the formulation in the 1893 essay "Mind and Matter," in *CP* 6.286: "Indeed, the whole business of ratiocination, and all that makes us intellectual beings, is performed in imagination. Vigorous men are wont to hold mere imagination in contempt; and in that they would be quite right if there were such a thing. . . . Mere imagination would indeed be mere trifling; only no imagination is mere" (emphasis in original). The great achievements of humankind, according to Peirce, are based on imaginary flights—or, in his precise language, the building of castles in the air—and the subsequent replication of them on the solid ground of practical reality. On the primary role accorded the imagination in the production of habits that mold human behavior, see Peirce, "Survey of Pragmatism," *CP* 5.479.

301. Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "Remembrance,"* 100; Heidegger, *Hölderlins Hymne "Andenken,"* 117–18. Compare Heidegger, *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*, 62; Heidegger, *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung*, 45. See the discussion of the correlation of time and the imagination, based on the description of the latter as simultaneously being and nonbeing, in Wolfson, "Retroactive Not Yet," 27–30.

302. Peirce, "Phaneron," *CP* 1.284, 287. On Peirce's phaneroscopy, see Parker, *Continuity*, 104–6; Short, *Peirce's Theory of Signs*, 60–90.

303. See Peirce, "Architecture of Theories," *CP* 6.32: "First is the conception of being or existing independent of anything else. Second is the conception of being relative to, the conception of reaction with, something else. Third is the conception of mediation, whereby a first and second are brought into relation. . . . The origin of things, considered not as leading to anything, but in itself, contains the idea of First, the end of things that of Second, the process mediating between them that of Third. . . . Chance is First, Law is Second, the tendency to take habits is Third. Mind is First, Matter is Second, Evolution is Third." The triad of firstness, secondedness, and thirdness was originally demarcated by Peirce as the categories of quality, relation, and representation—the second term eventually changed to reaction, and the third term to mediation. See Peirce, "Detached Ideas on Vitally Important Topics," in *CP* 4.3. For an extensive discussion of the Peircean categories and phenomenology, see Hausman, *Charles S. Peirce's Evolutionary Philosophy*, 94–139. Other pertinent references to the Peircean triad are mentioned above, n. 25. On Peirce's triune God and the Christian Trinity, see Deledalle, *Charles S. Peirce's Philosophy of Signs*, 170–80.

304. Peirce, "Three Kinds of Goodness," *CP* 5.120.

305. Peirce, "Law of Mind," *CP* 6.126, p. 99. See Parker, *Continuity*, 75–101. On infinitesimals, infinity, and infinitizing, see Niemoczynski, *Charles Sanders Peirce*, 53–56.

306. Peirce, "Issues of Pragmatism," *CP* 5.459.

307. Azriel of Gerona, *Be'ur Eser Sefirot*, 86.

308. Azriel of Gerona, *Be'ur Eser Sefirot*, 87.

309. Peirce, "On a New List of Categories," *CP* 5.556, 5.565. See Rosensohn, *Phenomenology*, 12–13, 53–54.

310. Peirce, "One, Two, Three," *Writings* 5.242–47. In that context, the third is not identified explicitly as a symbol but it is obvious that this is the appropriate classification from the characterization of it as "the general name or description which signifies its object by means of an association of ideas or habitual connection between the name and the character signified" (243). See the parenthetical gloss in the version of this study appended to Peirce's "Guess at the Riddle," *CP* 1.369. For a fuller analysis of the trichotomy of icon, index, and symbol, see Spinks, *Peirce and Triadomania*, 60–74. On thirdness and the sign relation, see Hookway, *Peirce*, 121–27.

311. Peirce, "One, Two, Three," *Writings* 5.299–300. Peirce's notion of generality, and the link between thirdness and continuity, is discussed by Hookway, *Peirce*, 172–80.

312. The text is cited in Peirce, *Writings*, 8.386–87 n. 111.3–5 (emphasis in original). On the nexus of law and thirdness, see Potter, *Charles S. Peirce*, 87–109.

313. Peirce, "Man's Glassy Essence," *Writings*, 8.181.

314. Peirce, "Architecture of Theories," *CP* 6.27 (emphasis in original).

315. Peirce, "Nominalism versus Realism," *Writings* 2.145. See Fisch, "Hegel and Peirce," 261–82.

316. Peirce, "Lecture on Logic," *Writings* 4.8–9 (emphasis in original).

317. Peirce, "Nominalism versus Realism," *Writings* 2.145 (emphasis in original).

318. Peirce, "Nominalism versus Realism," *Writings* 2.146.

319. Peirce, "Nominalism versus Realism," *Writings* 2.146–47.

320. Peirce, "Nominalism versus Realism," *Writings* 2.147.

321. See the passage referred to above in n. 1. The view of Peirce can be profitably compared to Rosenzweig, *Star of Redemption*, 144–45 (*Der Stern der Erlösung*, 147–48) "The world is made of things; in spite of the unity of its concrete reality, it does not constitute a single object but a multiplicity of objects, precisely things. The thing does not possess stability as long as it is there quite alone. It is conscious of its singularity [*Einzelheit*], of its individuality [*Individualität*], only in the multiplicity of things. The thing can be shown only in connection [*Zusammenhang*] with other things; it is determined by its spatial relationship with other things, within such a connection. Furthermore, as specific thing, it has no essence of its own, it does not exist in itself, it exists only in its relationships. The essence it has is not within it, but in the relationship it keeps according to its genus; it is behind its determination, and not in it that it must seek its essentiality [*Wesentlichkeit*], its universality [*Allgemeinheit*]." For a more extensive discussion of interconnectivity and the system of philosophy in Rosenzweig, see Wolfson, *Giving beyond the Gift*, 39–41.

322. Ochs, *Peirce, Pragmatism*, 299.

323. Peirce, "Nominalism versus Realism," *Writings* 2.147.

324. Peirce, "Nominalism versus Realism," *Writings* 2.150.

325. Peirce, "Neglected Argument," *CP* 6.490.

326. Niemoczynski, *Charles Sanders Peirce*, 1–34, esp. 26–28.

327. In scholarly literature, there is debate whether Saruq was a genuine disciple of Luria, an independent and perhaps less authentic interpreter of Lurianic doctrine, part of an independent circle of kabbalists in Safed that evolved alongside Luria's school, or perhaps someone who transformed Cordoverian themes in a Lurianic key. For some representative studies, see Wolfson, *Heidegger and Kabbalah*, 124 n. 32.

328. For my previous analysis of this motif, see Wolfson, *Circle in the Square*, 69–72, 189–92 nn. 174–80; Wolfson, *Language*, 271–87; Wolfson, *Alef*, 131–36; Wolfson, *Heidegger and Kabbalah*, 98–104. The motif of quivering in both Lurianic kabbalah and Heideggerian thought may be profitably compared to the state of trembling (*durchzittern*) in Hegel to mark the tension of the interiorization of alterity when the subject feels like an "other" in relation to itself. See Malabou, *Future of Hegel*, 32.

329. Bere'shit Rabba, 1:1, 8:1; b.Shabbat 89a.

330. See, for instance, Wolfson, *Language*, pp. 277–78, where I analyze the motif of *sha'ashu'a* in the Bahir.

331. See Zohar 1:178b, 245b; 2:173b, 217b, 255a; 3:193a.

332. See the Cordoverian texts cited in Wolfson, *Heidegger and Kabbalah*, 124 n. 37.

333. See primary and secondary sources cited in Wolfson, *Heidegger and Kabbalah*, 124 n. 38.

334. Wolfson, *Heidegger and Kabbalah*, 124–25 n. 39.

335. MSS Oxford, Bodleian Library 1783, fol. 48a and 1784, fol. 58a. For a list of other manuscript witnesses of this text, see Meroz, "Redemption in the Lurianic Teaching," 93. See, in particular, the reading preserved in MS Oxford-Bodleian 1741, fol. 128a: "When it arose in the will of the emanator to produce the letters, at first he was alone, delighting in himself." The text is published on the basis of MS New York, Columbia University X893 M6862 in Meroz, "Early Lurianic Compositions," 327–30 (Hebrew). The relevant passage appears on p. 327.

336. Zohar 1:15a. See Meroz, "Redemption," 111–12. It is noteworthy that Saruq's *Derush ha-Malbush* is presented as an explication of this zoharic passage. See Saruq, *Derush ha Malbush we-ha-Ṣimṣum*, 7. Concerning the zoharic symbol of the *boṣina de-qardinuta*, see the comments and reference to other sources in Wolfson, *Language*, 137, 321, 487 n. 198, 571–72 n. 200; and the more recent discussion in Necker, "Hans Blumenberg's Metaphorology," 194–98.

337. On musement in Peircean thought, see Raposa, *Peirce's Philosophy of Religion*, 117–41; Ochs, *Peirce, Pragmatism*, 228–29, 241–45, 250–51, 282–83, 288–89; White, *Hidden God*, 165–85.

338. Wolfson, *Language*, 278–79. Given the fact that kabbalists uniformly accepted the Galenic idea that the semen originates in the brain, it stands to reason that self-contemplation and auto-sexual arousal should be deemed two sides of the same coin.

339. It appears that the reference is to the ten sefirot that emerge from or correspond to the ten letters of the name YHWH when written out in full in one of the following three ways with the respective sums of 45, 63, and 72: *yw"d h"a wa"w h"a; yw"d h"y wa"w h"y; yw"d h"y wy"w h"y*. The fourth permutation of YHWH, which has a sum of 52, consists of nine letters: *yw"d h"h w"w h"h*. Another possible explanation is that the four letters of YHWH can be written as a sequence of ten letters: *yod, yod heh, yod heh waw, yod heh waw heh*. See Eliashiv, *Leshem Shevo we-Aḥlamah*, 126. On the derivation of the four different permutations from the letters of the name YHWH, which are set in the garment, see Saruq, *Derush ha-Malbush*, 14.

340. Saruq, *Limmudei Aṣilut*, 3a. Compare the version in Delmedigo, *Ta'alumot Ḥokhmah*, 77b, and the introduction to the commentary on *Sifra di-Ṣeni'uta* in Saruq, *Limmudei Aṣilut*, 34c-d.

341. Peirce, "Neglected Argument," *CP* 6.458–65.

342. Savan, "Peirce and Idealism."

343. Peirce, "Man's Glassy Essence," 181.

344. Peirce, “Man’s Glassy Essence,” 181. The fuller text is cited above, on p. 175.

345. Spinks, *Peirce and Triadomania*, 202.

346. I have discussed this understanding of imaginal embodiment in many of my studies. For a relatively succinct summary, see Wolfson, “Bifurcating the Androgyne,” 88–95; and see Wolfson, “Asceticism,” 172–73.

347. Hecker, *Mystical Bodies,* 181. The intent of this taxonomy is made clear with respect to the particular topic of food in Hecker, *Mystical Bodies*, 3: “The kabbalah views food as something other than physiologically sustaining, and it idealizes foods as providing a key to sundering the boundaries between the spiritual and the material, bringing that which is on high to the realm of the mundane and that which is brought forth from the ground to the realm of the ethereal.”